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A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE State of England,

When King *JAMES* design'd to call his Second PARLIAMENT.

Collected chiefly from the Third Volume of the Reverend Dr. *Kennet*'s History of *England*.

THE Papists being still apprehended to persist in their Arbitrary Designs, and several Proclamations of late having been issued out against them; It was thought fit for the Benefit of the Publick at this Time, to publish a short Account of their Management, when they were in Power.

When King *James* the Second came to the Throne, he was vehemently suspected, tho' not openly declar'd to be of a Religion different from that of the Church of *England*. However, in his first Speech to his Council, and afterwards to his Parliament, he was graciously pleas'd to declare, *That he would preserve the Government both in Church and State. That he would always support the Church of* England. *That he affected not Arbitrary Power. Would invade no Man's Property, and aim'd to be no Greater than the Laws would make him.* I would in Charity believe, that the King himself, at that Time, meant what he said, and design'd to have been as good as his Word, had he not been seduc'd by Evil Counsels.

Never was Prince met with more Duty and Loyalty at his coming to the Throne, than this King was. His Parliament, without Delay, settl'd upon him all the Revenues, which his Predecessor had enjoy'd; and shew'd themselves in all Instances (particularly in the Case of the Duke of *Monmouth*, who then pretended to the Crown) remarkably Zealous for his Service, as far as was consistent with their Honour, and Duty to their

Country; but ſomething More being ſtill expected from them, they were haſtily Prorogued, and at laſt ungratefully Diſſolved, with many Marks of Diſlike and Diſgrace.

Vol. III. *Hiſt. Engl.* p. 427. The firſt Offence taken in that Reign was, at the Diſreſpect ſhown to the Memory of the late King; than whom no Prince was ever more belov'd by his Subjects, or better deſerv'd it. The Inſtance was notorious, in the King's *obſcure* and *parſimonious Funeral*.

When the Court-Deſigns came to be known, the Thing contended for appear'd to be no leſs than the Church and Conſtitution, which were to have been deſtroy'd, under the ſpecious Notion of *Liberty of Conſcience*. The *V.* p. 463. Purport of King *James*'s Declaration was, That a *Toleration* was abſolutely neceſſary for the Peace and Quiet of all his Subjects; That it was no way inconſiſtent with the Safety of the Eſtabliſh'd Church, and highly uſeful to promote and encourage Trade.

The Parliament, as has been ſaid, being found not for the Court Purpoſes, was continued from time to time by Prorogation, till Matters ſhould be Ripe, and the Country diſpos'd to ſend Another, which would ſerve their Turn better. During that Time, the Meaſures taken, and the State of Things at Court were as follows.

P. 481. *Med. Hiſt. Angl.* p. 303. A thorough Change was made in the Miniſtry, and Thoſe who had been voted by Parliament, in the former Reign, Enemies to the King and Kingdom, were now in the Higheſt Poſts of Truſts and Honour near his Majeſty's Perſon.

Lord *Sunderland*, a Falſe, Ambitious, Treacherous Miniſter, had great Credit with the King, was always at his Ear to miſinform and miſguide Him, and did, by his Counſels precipitate Him into ſuch violent Meaſures, as in the End prov'd his Ruin.

Vol. III. *Hiſt. Angl.* p. 450. Lord *Clarendon* was recall'd from *Ireland*, and *Tyrconnel*, a Hot, Heavy, Inſolent, Revengeful Lord, who worſhip'd at that Altar, to which *Sunderland* was afterwards ſaid to *bow low*, was ſent over Lord-Lieutenant in his ſtead, to do the Drudgery in that Kingdom.

To make ſure of *Weſtminſter-Hall*, Sir *Thomas Jones*, the Chief-Juſtice of the *Common-Pleas*, the greateſt Lawyer, the beſt Judge, and a Man as much above Suſpicion of Corruption, as perhaps ever fill'd that Seat, together with ſeveral other worthy Judges, were diſplac'd, and new Men P. 473. preferr'd in their ſtead, as my Hiſtorian expreſſes himſelf, *of Weakneſs, or Wilful Compliance*. But in *Ireland*, Lord-Chancellor and Judges were routed by Wholeſale, and a Pack of Wretches ſet upon the Bench, whoſe Names were never heard of at the Bar.

The Judge of the Admiralty, Sir *Thomas Exton*, a Civilian of eminent Parts and Learning, a Man of great Uprightneſs, Virtue, and Spirit, was, in a moſt arbitrary Manner, turn'd out of that Poſt, for aſſiſting a worthy Prelate then under a violent and unjuſt Proſecution. I mean, the Biſhop of *London*, whoſe *true* Crime was, whatever was the Pretence, a ſmart Speech he had made againſt the Diſpenſing Power; which was call'd Reflecting upon the King and Miniſtry.

Directions were printed to prohibit the Clergy from Preaching upon P. 446. Controverſial Points; which my Learned Author calls *An enſnaring Letter or Order*, and from ſome Body elſe gives us this Comment, *That upon the Matter, it was forbidding the Clergy to defend themſelves when attack'd.*

Violent

Violent Party-Zeal, and Scribbling for the Cauſe was Merit enough to preferr a Man to a Biſhoprick. *Sam. Parker*, a Man of that Character, and a noted Drudge that Way, was ſent down to the Dioceſe of *Oxford*; without queſtion to try, if his Preſence and Authority might Awe and Influence the Univerſity.

Diſſenters of all Kind appear'd, and were careſſed at Court. Many about the King's Perſon, who were diſqualify'd by Act of Parliament from taking Places themſelves, had nevertheleſs the Intereſt to get the Selling of them to others, and ſhar'd with them in the Profits. The Ladies of Pleaſure were obſerv'd to have leſs Power now, than in the former Reign; the King being unfortunately fond of his own Wife. P. 465.

The Army was new-model'd. All the Officers that were ſuſpected, ſome upon ſmall Pretences, others upon no Pretence at all, were forc'd to quit. More Forces were thought convenient to be kept on Foot; but to give the leſs Occaſion of Jealouſy, the Levies were made Abroad, and the Army reinforc'd or re-eſtabliſh'd, as I think the Term was, in *Ireland*. *The Court was crowded with Shoals of Officers, and no other Kind of Men were ſo welcome there.* Theſe Men had whor'd, drunk, ranted, and bully'd about the Bill of Excluſion, and now made it their Plea, that They had been Sufferers for the Succeſſion. P. 487. P. 472.

Extraordinary Commiſſions were ſent down into the Weſt to hang People. *Their* Crime was Rebellion. Every little Scuffle at an Election was improv'd to a Riot, and many were inform'd againſt, haraſſed, proſecuted, and fin'd upon moſt trivial Occaſions. P. 438.

The Lord Lieutenants were made ſure to a Man quite through the Kingdom. The Sheriffs all prepar'd. Juſtices of the Peace turn'd out by Forties and Fifties in a County. The Mayors and Bayliffs in all Corporations bought or terrify'd into Compliance. Officers of the Exciſe, Cuſtoms, Hearth-Money, Treaſury, and all the Offices then in Being, were either turn'd out, or engag'd for ſuch Men as the Court ſet up. Nothing was omitted, but the ſending down Directions printed by Authority, not to chooſe ſuch Men as had voted for the Bill of Excluſion. Strange it was, that a Method ſo obvious ſhould not be thought of: There being then many Men canvaſſing for Elections, who were *not falſly ſuſpected*, but known, profeſſed and avow'd Voters againſt the King's Coming to the Crown. P. 466.

With about three Years Management, Things were brought thus far; Which was thought pretty violent Work, and not to have been done with much Decency. All the while, the Miniſtry profeſſed their Care of the Church, though ſcarce a Man of them, or a Man preferr'd by them, but was of known Diſaffection to it, or at beſt ſat very looſe in his Principles about it. However, they wip'd their Mouths, cry'd All was well, were amaz'd that what they did could give Suſpicion or Diſturbance to any Body. What might have happen'd, was prevented by the Glorious Revolution.

FINIS